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New Depression Niches...

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Religion at Home . . .

By Ruth Hornung

DEVOTIONAL expression should be a natural part of our daily lives, stated Dr. Nelson P. Horn, director of religious life at Iowa State College, when asked what is the part of religion in the home.

Dr. Horn is an educationalist and has the rare quality of striving to be consistent in the things he believes. He is a clear, careful thinker, who is by no means satisfied with conditions as they are, but rather is striving to establish a stronger and firmer belief among people in a beatified religion. In his work with the students he believes that the presentation of religion should be not primarily through scientific courses, but rather that religious principles should permeate the whole of campus life.

"This same principle should characterize religious instruction in the home," Dr. Horn declared. "The home is the center and circumference of childhood's early life, and from that quarter should come the introduction and teaching of religion." It should come as a natural part of training, in answer to the child's urge to know, and with no attempt at mystifying or superimposing adult concepts, he said.

Because the idea of religion first gains impetus in the home, and because first impressions are often the strongest, religious instruction should involve careful guidance. The idea of religion should be presented in a way that is natural and simple enough to be grasped and comprehended by the developing mind of a child, Dr. Horn suggested. Although the Sunday School is an indispensable part of a child's religious training, it may sometimes be detrimental in that it raises questions for which the child is not ready or which never need be raised at all. The child sees everything concretely, and has difficulty in comprehending abstract ideas until they are translated into his own range of understanding. Sometimes early mistaken ideas of religion are due to misunderstandings and must later be unlearned in order to get religious poise, according to Dr. Horn.

Only as the lessons of life are lived in the home does the child learn them. The same thing is true of religion, yet lately there has been a tendency to shift the complete responsibility of religious education to the church. One of the greatest needs that is comparable to general education in the home is the need of parent education. A great difficulty is that some parents do not realize the importance of their role in shaping characters. They are inclined to be relieved whenever there is an alternative to choose

rather than to do the teaching themselves, Dr. Horn explained.



Dr. Horn

One of the problems of devotional life in some families is that there is too great a division between this phase

and that of general learning, Dr. Horn stated. In families where a certain time is set aside each day for the reading of the Bible, the sense of religion is apt to become confused with the routine of reading. It is set aside, specified and labeled, until it becomes a thing of mystery, of which young children become a little awed, secretly frightened, or perhaps indifferent.

We should make religion, rather, a natural part of the child's life. Dr. Horn, with four children of his own whom he lovingly refers to as "the Hornets," says that it should be made as natural to talk about religion as about any other topic. If grace is offered at meals, everyone should enter into it, or the children may take turns.

In a group of two or three, or more, we should be able to speak with earnest conviction on any subject upon which the mind may ponder, Dr. Horn continued. We all have found that after superficial chatter among a group of close friends has subsided, the conversation turns to the expression of our innermost and most devout thoughts. The same situation may be found in the home, Dr. Horn says, whenever the atmosphere is cleared of the ordinary exchange of words.

"However, the conversation, in order to be religious, need not be about religion any more than conversation at meals need be about digestion. In fact, our deepest religious experiences come ordinarily when our talk is not about re-

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New Depression Niches . . .

Lita Bane on Homemaking

HOME economics women are doing greater things during the present emergency than they would have accomplished in many years of prosperity, said Miss Lita Bane, associate editor of the Ladies' Home Journal, who visited the campus Friday, April 21.

"In any great emergency like war or economic depression we are called upon to do many tasks," said Miss Bane. "Home economics women are equipped to do many different kinds of tasks. At present they may have only apprentice positions, but they can find places to be very useful."

It is the trained home economist's task to keep in touch with untrained homemakers, according to Miss Bane.

"We often forget that there are people who do not know things that seem elementary to us," she stated. "We must offer what we have of value to these women."

"A homemaker holds more happiness in the hollow of her hand than any other

one person. She must know certain fundamental things in order to fulfill her place. She must know how to keep her family healthy and how to make her home a pleasant and satisfying place in which to live by making it attractive and comfortable. She must know the principles of mental health in order to make her home an on-going thing. She must know how to manage money and how to operate household machinery, knowledge not deemed necessary for her mother. And finally, the homemaker must keep up her own morale. She must feel that she has an important place. She must not say that she is 'only a homemaker' and neglect her real duties for social obligations."

Miss Bane's aim for the homemaker is to have the home economically sound, mechanically convenient, physically healthful, morally wholesome, mentally stimulating, artistically satisfying, socially responsible, spiritually inspiring, and founded upon mutual affection and respect.